

## Bibliography:

**Wilfrid Blunt**  
on botanical books



*By Lionel Trilling*

For this way of teaching, the optimum number of students would seem to be twenty and a practicable maximum probably cannot be higher than thirty. To my amaze-

The reason deserves some notice. It had to do with my ambiguous feelings about the position Jane Austen had come to occupy in our literary culture and about the nature of the esteem and the regard of London who was being given by scholars and critics. I was shaken back over the period of time during which I was at all aware of Jane Austen. I had of course to recognize that a decisive change had taken place in the way of thinking about her. One thing that was thought about. One thing that was thought of as a change by saying that she was now in higher esteem than formerly. A glance through Chepman's critical bibliography makes plain to me the heights the esteem had reached. I was aware how grand were the terms in which she was regarded. Indeed, expressed, including the word most with Shakespeare. Indeed, when it came to the question of how much praise she deserved, a more or less elaborate eulogium. Jane could say that she was given too much of it, or at least that it was of the wrong sort. And by people of the wrong sort. Given as if at the instance of every Jane's little burst of temper over this state of affairs, regarded in which Jane Austen had begun to change its nature in relation to her.

The making of Jane Austen into a figure has of recent years been accelerated, probably in part by the contemporary demand for such figures, though certainly not for her alone. It is not difficult to say why I am not uncomfortable terms with the figure of Jane Austen in particular, and the chief reason for my not wanting to give the course as lectures was certainly because I have account of the enormous obscurity of articulate sensibility which has developed around Jane Austen would put me under the obligation of trying to do it. Paradoxical because I have held the primitive belief the world was such a thing as life itself which I did not want interfered with by literature or by the intellectual academic criticism, I did not wish to encourage it to augment the abundance of superabundant, the ever urgent intellectual activity that was being directed toward a body of work whose value I would be the first to assert.

ment. There was something they  
 were proud of, but, as was soon  
 apparent, but from the fact that  
 something that was making for an  
 intensity in their application for  
 a course such as I had no prop-  
 er for. In all my teaching  
 career, I had no make out, but  
 I did not think it should be  
 they should be required to formu-  
 late reasons why they should be  
 to take the course—why  
 would not the necessity of their  
 application be tested? I wrote  
 them, after their interviews, draw-  
 ing a pleading note. Several sought  
 colleagues of mine with whom  
 they had a reputation and  
 asked them to intercede. I sent  
 two messages came from friends  
 to be taught in other colleges in  
 telling me that certain grad-  
 uates who had worked with  
 me as under-graduates deserved  
 most thought could be given

The use of social-political law to explain the literary production was dealing with is less a general substitution by the dramatic and the novel of the two genres of the English literature of the 19th century and been given a somewhat English literary figure of a deviation with enough of a different kind, was intense as that which was not being given to Jane Austen and her feelings about social class. American undergraduates seem to be over more alienated from the general body of English literature, but they had to find some time machine to England, bleeding him their own longing allegiance, and in the end when the large majority of the students of their university were admitted to the sciences, the disruption, they had to be relevant to their approach.

But it is plain that the churning visual quality of Jane Austen's "world," even when we grant it all the surreal significance it can have, will not be enough to make for the present appeal that these novels make. If it could do so, we might expect that William Morris's *News from Nowhere* would rival the Austen novels in interest, for there no one ever grows up in the novel, weight as Morris did to the look of human existence, especially to the question of scale, making it one of the testis of his redeemed London. The donors of the novel, however, should hold in contempt the dimensions of St. Paul's and the coarseness of the mind of Chretophere. When in having fixed upon these books of course to the modern taste Morris's usage of novels is little more than a pleasing curiosity. It is a tribute to Morris's honesty that we can so easily perceive why this is so, for Morris is explicit: I

Perhaps this is so, but after the Jane Austen course had gone on for a time, the enormous qualifying power of that word "essentially" became manifest to me. Essentially like our own that past culture and those minds, or selves, which created it and were created by it doubtless were, but between them and us there stretched a green range of existential differences.

And then there was the question of the why and the degree in which a person might be morally conscious. The students were more in the least inclined to cynicism but they were gently amused when Eleanor Dashwood, in response to Marinne's question, says that when she was a child, the first time she was the consciousness that she was doing her duty. They thought it downright quaint of Anne Elliot to say to Captain Wentworth that she had been right in submitting to Lady Russell because a "strange sense of duty is no bad part of a woman's nature." And they did what we could imagine, take account of the cultural implications of that highly charged word "portion".

Inevitably we went into manners in its several meanings, including, of course, the one that Habbes assigns to it when he says that manners are small morals. I sought to elicit an explanation of the legendary propriety of the novel in relation to what might be concluded about the sexual mores of the age and about those curious moments in the author's published letters which E. M. Forster speaks of as the "deplorable lapses of taste over courtesy."

All this might well suggest that the direction of the discussion was toward "snybering" the "basic" sections of the program, and that pedagogy—so far from wishing to bring about the realization of how similar to ourselves are the persons of a past society, it was actually the dissimilarity between "them and us" that I pressed upon. At the time, I could only have been wrong. I am now convinced that the reason why I inclined to cast doubt upon the procedure by which humanism puts literature at the service of our moral lives, but my more or less random undertaking has since been given a meaning and a direction. The certain formulations which have been put forward by a distinguished anthropologist,

I refer to the lecture, delivered in the spring of 1974, in which Professor Clifford Geertz examines the epistemology of cultures, asking what knowledge we can have of cultures unlike our own and what we can know of our own culture. The general knowledge of the content of the lecture is to say that, contrary to common belief, the faculty of empathy plays but a minimal part in the knowledge an anthropologist gains of alien cultures, and to describe the means by which reliable understanding actually is achieved. Drawing upon his own experience, Mr Geertz puts the matter thus:

In all three of the societies I have studied intensively, Javanese, Balinese, and Moroccan, I have been concerned, among other things, with attempting to determine how the people who live there define themselves as persons, what enters into the idea they have (but . . . only half realize they have) of what a self, Javanese, Balinese, or Moroccan style, is.

In each case I have tried to arrive at this most intimate of notions not by imagining myself as someone else—a rich peasant or a tribal sheikh, and then ageing water. I thought—but by searching out and analysing the

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It might be said that Morrie, for his own reasons, edumbrates the programmatic novelist of character which increasingly marks the novel of our day, the contemporary novel, in finding it ever more beside the point to deal with the characters as they were actually personal, or at least to do so in any other way than that of pastiche and parody. Surely an obvious reason why the students turned so eagerly to Jane Austen is that they felt the need to see pastiche and parody as they are, once typically represented them; that, without formulating their need, they were in effect making a stand against the novel in its contemporary mode. We should never forget that for a generation that young people invaded the novel as a medium, actively to what is innovative and antitraditional in the high artistic culture of their time; there is the distinct possibility that the students with whom I was dealing saw the contemporary novel as being the place in which to demonstrate the modern disposition which they judged to be maleficent, such as industrialism, urbanization, the multiplicity. This intolerance would have to do with the reduction of their beliefs, and presumably their feelings, to a formula, and the reduction of the characters of Jane Austen's novels, and indeed







# Brotherly hate

By Frances Donaldson

**BROCARD SEWELL:**  
Cecil Chesterton  
107pp. St Albans Press. £3.75.

Cecil Chesterton, born in 1879 and a brother of G. K. Chesterton, was a journalist and writer on politics and history. He worked on *The New Age* with A. R. Orage and in 1911 became assistant editor to Hilaire Belloc on *The Eye-Witness*. After about a year he took the paper over from Belloc, who continued to write for it, and renaming it *The New Witness*, edited it until he left for the front in 1915, when G. K. Chesterton took his place. He wrote a history of the United States and collaborated with Belloc in a criticism of Parliament called *The Paris System*. Born a Unitarian, he entered the Church of England as an Anglo-Catholic when a young man, and then in 1912 became Roman Catholic.

He had a pungent prose style and, like his brother, wrote as easily as many people speak. He was not highly talented and he would hardly attract attention today if it were not for the erudite task of cataloguing his fellow men, and for the influence he had on his brother and on Belloc.

Cecil Chesterton saw civil and corruption at home. So did Belloc. In *The Paris System* they developed the theme that government in England was corrupted by agreement and arrangement between the two Front Benches, whose members were interrelated and representative of the same interests. They were not in opposition as they were in the House of Commons, and even worse had prevailed in a statement about this to the House of Commons. Vulnerable on that occasion, ministers allowed *The Eye-Witness* to accuse them weeks after the result of the half-conscious working of the class system—the Establishment—had unfortunately wherever they looked they saw deliberate and assumed it, their duty to correct. In a different place Cecil Chesterton wrote that the Law of Labels was "just whatever a particular old gentleman who, generally after years of serving the public in Parliament, has been jobbed into a salaried post or many thousands in vent, chooses to say it is", and this is hardly an exaggeration of his normal style of invective.

In *The Eye-Witness* Belloc and Chesterton have harassed everyone they disliked or disagreed with. Both were anti-Jewish. Belloc liked to pretend that his antipathy to Jews was confined to those who were international financiers and he distressed him when Chesterton gave the game away by attacking the

Jews as such. His disclaimers carried little weight, however, because of the insolence and relish with which he conducted his own campaigns. There is no doubt that *The Eye-Witness* sometimes exposed genuine scandals. However, Leonard Woolf, who was at school with Chesterton, says that even as a boy "he had a streak of that kind of fanatical intolerance which seems to be fertilized, not by profound convictions, but by personal animosities," while Belloc's zeal, according to his own admission, caused many of his friends to turn from him.

In 1916 Chesterton married Miss Ada Jones, better known as R. K. Protheroe, a journalist who had been in close association with him on *The Eye-Witness*. The later life Mrs Chesterton did good work in establishing the Cecil House for homeless women in London, but she, too, seems to have been poisonously influenced. In a book called *The Paris System* she weaved a fantasy of spiteful inventions about Mrs G. K. Chesterton, to the sorrow and embarrassment of their friends; and there is good reason to believe she was responsible for some of the worst excesses of *The New Witness*.

All this culminated in the Marconi scandal. Belloc and Chesterton (and in addition a journalist named Wilfrid Rougier, who was the Postmaster General, Herbert Samuel, of corruptly giving a corrupt contract to the managing director of the Marconi Company, Godfrey Isaac, the brother of the Attorney General, Rufus Isaacs. Unfortunately Rufus Isaacs was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, had bought shares in the American Marconi Company, which could be sold to have benefited in an indirect way from the contract between the British Government and the English Marconi Company, and even worse had prevailed in a statement about this to the House of Commons. Vulnerable on that occasion, ministers allowed *The Eye-Witness* to accuse them weeks after the result of the half-conscious working of the class system—the Establishment—had unfortunately wherever they looked they saw deliberate and assumed it, their duty to correct. In a different place Cecil Chesterton wrote that the Law of Labels was "just whatever a particular old gentleman who, generally after years of serving the public in Parliament, has been jobbed into a salaried post or many thousands in vent, chooses to say it is", and this is hardly an exaggeration of his normal style of invective.

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examination. Chesterton gradually withdrew all charges, saying that if ministers said on oath that they had not dealt corruptly he would not accuse them of lying.

We have come to believe that progress is almost always downhill. Very few in the atmosphere of today could, ruthlessly and taking a stand on superior personal morality, seek out evil in their fellows as Belloc and the Chestertons did. (In 1918, on the occasion of Cecil's death, G. K. Chesterton wrote an outrageous open letter to Rufus Isaacs in *The New Witness* which, with a eulogistic pretension to charity, repeated the charges his brother had been forced to withdraw.)

There may still be room for a book about these things, because, although Cecil Chesterton has no other claim on our attention, his brother and Belloc have. Brocard Sewell has not entirely succeeded in writing it. He has had to rely mostly on published material. For those interested he has assembled the facts of Chesterton's career in narrative form and in a reasonably impartial way, but he has not increased our understanding of the man or his circle.

## Letters from an anti-hero

By J. S. Atherton

**MIRIAM I. BENKOVITZ:**

*A Passionate Prodigality*  
Letters to Alan Bird from Richard Aldington  
361pp. New York Public Library. \$15.

Reading this collection of 147 letters from Richard Aldington, with only one extract from a letter by Alan Bird in the works, is like listening to someone having a good long gossip on the phone. The letters are carefully annotated and the eavesdropper found himself being entertained.

The letters begin in 1949 when Bird, then a student at Cambridge, wrote early in the year admiring Aldington's translation of *De Natura Aesthetica*, and again, about November, enclosing a copy of his own poem "Steel" which had gained the Chaucerian medal. The replies were kindly and spiced with a few barbed remarks on contemporary writers. A year later, when Bird had become a graduate student at Oxford, he wrote what seems to have been a long letter to Aldington's book on D. H. Lawrence, *Portrait of a Genius*. But in his reply Aldington explains, or glosses over, various points which had troubled Bird (crudely to the dog "Biddles" barking at you) and then asks for Bird's help in collecting information about life in the



AN ATTACK OF CUBO-VICTORITIS  
Some Hopes of Recovery

These cartoons of the dancers *Maschine* and *Karavanga* by Edmund D. appear in *Nesto Macdonald's account of the Diaghilev ballet through the eyes of contemporary reviewers: Diaghilev Observed* (Mills & Boon, £10.50 until April 30, thereafter £12.50).



"THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RUSSIAN BALLET"  
The Wrong Turning

These cartoons of the dancers *Maschine* and *Karavanga* by Edmund D. appear in *Nesto Macdonald's account of the Diaghilev ballet through the eyes of contemporary reviewers: Diaghilev Observed* (Mills & Boon, £10.50 until April 30, thereafter £12.50).

Oxford of 1890 to 1920. The next letter, ten days later, thanks Bird for his "generous offer" of help. From then on letters were exchanged regularly until Aldington's death.

Aldington was writing his debunking book *Lawrence of Arabia*, and wanted information about T. E. Lawrence who had lived in Oxford from the age of eight, and attended school and university there. Bird, working hard on Aldington's problems, was rewarded with uninhibited gossip letters commenting on whatever was engaging Aldington's attention. The personality that emerges from *A Passionate Prodigality* is attractive even if—as he says himself occasionally—cantankerous.

He writes about whatever comes into his head, whirling his prejudices like some medieval warrior swinging a skull-cracker. Some examples seem demolished, and charity suggests that I begin at home. Reviewers come off badly: they "don't read books—they report the gossip of the town and praise their friends... It is better to ignore their ignorant comments. The TLS is the worst... Its contributors include 'two in the most offensive franks in London'. And, as he says that reviewers all have the nasty habit of quoting phrases out of context, perhaps I am justified in adding that he describes Churchill both as 'the most powerful man in the world' and 'a hero, but' and as 'Yankov-Pondle'. Eisenhower is pronounced in France 'Is-no-where'. Wyndham Lewis 'could never resist lampooning anyone who gave him money', but 'a few of his portraits were

absolutely first class—and damn experts!'. There is indeed 'passionate prodigality' in his loves and hates that justify his seeming irrelevance of a life's title; and Aldington's outgoing male endeavor by his own praises of the "Divine humors" he hopes to produce.

It is to be hoped that politics of these letters will revive them in Aldington's other works, which are out of print and almost forgotten. A notice in the latest edition of the *World's Nerval* (Paris, 1966) lists for him one Czech and two German translations, but not the English one. Aldington that first attracted attention.

Miriam Benkovitz's editing is a work of devotion. She plans, in time after each letter a biographical index at the end of everything that needs explanation. Perhaps more than everything, but where is one to draw the line? I detected only one error: the Aldington mentions by name the *Dampier* is, as he says, *History of Science* (Cambridge, 1929). Aldington's custom of book titles with neither underlines nor the old-fashioned quotation marks has led Mr Benkovitz to put the titles by putting them in italics with the printers, who in this every other respect have done a superb job with scrupulous care. The book, the production, which is a credit to the office of the New York Public Library.

## FICTION

# Twists of fortune

By Richard Mayne

**RENÉ CLAIR:**  
*Jeux du hasard*  
252pp. Paris: Gallimard. 39fr.

René Clair is seventy-eight this year; and my first reaction on opening his collection of short stories was to flinch at the prospect of aged spriteliness—a literary counterpart of the late Maurice Chevalier to his final films, boylike verve to the last. It was fifty-three years ago, after all, that Clair made his first feature, the haunting and resonant (though silent) *Paris qui dort*. His British, American, and post-war movies ranged more widely; but if anyone mentions "René Clair's Paris" the picture invoked is that of the 1920s and 1930s, in films like *Quai des Folies*, *La nuit de la Saint-Jean*, *La nuit de la Saint-Jean*, and above all *Les fêtes de Paris*. A recent film about Edith Piaf did its best to reconstruct that omniscient—grey, leaded roof, old-fashioned ceasing windows, cobbled streets and shabby, peeling walls. The attempt was faithful and pure of Paris still look that way. Yet the pastiche simply emphasized how distant that epoch now seems. Accordion music and the *caf'conc'* in *Les fêtes de Paris* the zinc counter; a *musette* drooping from a wet lip—all seem too Gaby to be true any more. Or too René Clair.

The surprise, or so one by now will be surprised to learn, is how sharp and lively these are nevertheless. No one could call them avant-garde—unless a taste for the fantastic and the occult is a mark of modernity. Most of them are too enjoyable to be smart. But if they seem in some respects a Gallie equivalent of Somerset Maugham's neat anecdotes, they hold more conviction and are more attractively felt and written. With Maugham, there was often a sense of sharp shocks and sudden education; "cynicism", expressed in prose that lacked bite. With Clair, the conventions may be those of the farce, the thriller, and the *fête foraine*; but the author's warmth of feeling, even for dialogue, and real interest in his characters make *Jeux du hasard*

Faith, fate, surprises: the ingredients are those of the theatre, to which many of these tales hark back. In *Jeu de hasard*, a man, a film-maker, appealing especially to a film-maker, is that of deception and lies. The most traditional story here, with a touch of Maupassant in its setting and its plot, is "Stok"—a mere anecdote about a young blood in a garrison town who fights a duel with an officer, and is killed, to defend the name of a sister, who does not exist. The young blood himself is a fraud, a mere bank clerk. He takes honour so seriously that he ennobles deceit.

More amusing is the deception of "Sir Christopher". Lusting for an opera singer, he thinks to have won her, but the Parisian band, who arranged their trust has substituted

## The Midas touch

By William Feaver

**NICHOLAS GAGE:**  
*The Bourlet's Fortune*  
453pp. Wadsworth and Nicolson. £3.95.

The striking rich and their doings are supposed to be the envy of all. On this assumption a recital of trading figures, marriage settlements and divorce proceedings is all that is required to construct a eulogistic bestseller. Harold Robbins has done it; Frederick Forsyth has done it; and now Nicholas Gage, described in blurb parlance as an "investigative" reporter with the *New York Times*, has turned in a fictionalized account of the fortunes of Greek shipowners in this century. Everything you may have expected is there: the poor and terrorized island background, the years spent on cargo boats and in

intellectually formidable, bizarrely dressed, three times married detective is a true original.

In this book she is not yet a Dame. The story is set in an Oxfordshire village at some unspecified time in the past. The body of a young woman is found in the village ditch, and that of a disreputable renaissance man is found in the garden. Both crimes are linked to Bill House, whose chateaux calls in her friend Mrs. Lorraine Bradley. Two intelligent and likeable children help in the investigation, and the story is largely seen through their eyes. The central villainy, unfailingly hated, is on the jacket is not wholly believable. But then one does not read Miss Mitchell primarily for the credibility of the tale but for the pleasure of its telling.

P. D. James

**GLADYS MITCHELL:**  
*Late, Late in the Evening*  
190pp. Michael Joseph. £3.25.

This is Gladys Mitchell's fiftieth novel featuring her psychiatrist-detective, Dame Beatrice Adelaide Lestrang Bradley, and it is right that aficionados of her redoubtable eccentric should salute a mammoth jubilee. Miss Mitchell began her career in the golden age of detective fiction, and has maintained her highly individual talent through all the genre's vicissitudes. She is a tough lady. Mystery writers shrink from making a child either victim or murderer; Miss Mitchell has no such qualms, and so it is arguable that her best book-the killer and the killed are children. And her

somebody else. Sir Christopher falls in love, proposes marriage; the singer thereafter receiving the letter, implies at the funeral; there he meets the smug one, previously joined only in the dark. He loses his heart again. They marry. A faint memory stirs—a familiar perfume. The lady changes it, and happiness is saved.

Such are the slightnesses of these fancies. Others—concern chance encounters, adult intrigues espied by children, the perils and paradoxes of love undecoded, misunderstood, and so thwarted, or the pitfalls of not recognizing one's age. Only one of them, "Le petit ours", seemed to me to be sentimental, rather as the "Rosebud" revelation flaws *Citizen Kane*. And one long story, centring on a ghost (or apparent ghost), struck me as overwrought, failing to communicate the emotion that its author believed was there. Otherwise, adroitness is all.

That, of course, is not everything. Some may feel that the props are battered, the scenery faded, the domesticated style. The author handles them, these surprises really shock: not for nothing did he script nearly all his own films. Here, the nearest English equivalent is probably the early Evelyn Waugh, of *Vile Bodies* and *Scops*. In *Vile Bodies*, each surprise seems inevitable. The narrator's cool sure remains, seemingly, indifferent. But inside, what misery and gloom.

Faith, fate, surprises: the ingredients are those of the theatre, to which many of these tales hark back. In *Jeu de hasard*, a man, a film-maker, appealing especially to a film-maker, is that of deception and lies. The most traditional story here, with a touch of Maupassant in its setting and its plot, is "Stok"—a mere anecdote about a young blood in a garrison town who fights a duel with an officer, and is killed, to defend the name of a sister, who does not exist. The young blood himself is a fraud, a mere bank clerk. He takes honour so seriously that he ennobles deceit.

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# A guy and a doll

By David Lodge

**TOM SHARPE:**  
*Wilt*  
211pp. Secker and Warburg. £3.50.

With a name like Henry Wilt, Tom Sharpe's hero has the odds of life stacked heavily against him, of course. It comes as no surprise to find that he is a sexual sluggard and a professional failure: no match for his energetic and ambitious wife Eva and still a Lecturer Grade 2 after ten years of forcing Liberal Studies (mainly in the form of *Lord of the Flies*) down the unwilling throats of apprentice mechanics, printers and butchers (a dreaded class known as "Meat One") at the local Tech. For his part, Henry despises Eva's restless efforts to improve herself by a promiscuous indulgence in such cultural pursuits as yoga, pottery and flower arrangement. Indeed, as humiliation and frustration pile up, Henry increasingly takes refuge in obsessive fantasies of doing away with his wife, and the urge becomes almost irresistible when she is adopted by a pair of swinging Californian visitors to the local university, and tries to drag him out into their polymorphously perverse lifestyle.

At an awful party given by the awful Americans Henry declines an offer from his hostess to give him a blow job: "Don't you touch me," he shouted, his mind alive with images of burning pain." He knocks himself out shortly afterwards, and in place she takes advantage of him by inserting his penis into the appropriate orifice of a life-size plastic doll with which her husband occasionally solaces himself, over-inflating it to such a degree that when Wilt comes round he is unable to, as it were, withdraw. I could suspect my diabolical in this incident, for a good deal of importance attaches to it.

From this point onwards the plot unravels with a good deal of broad fun, mostly at the expense of the police investigating the crime. The trouble is that in winding up the mechanism of the comedy Mr Sharpe has already strained not only by implausibility but, more damagingly, by inconsistency. The character of Eva, for instance, is full of courtesies, extreme innocence combined with determined trendiness, and it is not even clear whether she is physically attractive or repulsive. She certainly never seems evil enough to explain Henry's homicidal impulses, and in any case his discontent could be for more easily alleviated by simply walking out on her. In the fictional world of P. G. Wodehouse, with whom Mr Sharpe has frequently been compared, such questions do not arise, because a wholly conventional and consistent code of moderation is taken for granted. Mr Sharpe oscillates uneasily between comic stereotypes (hen-pecked husbands would like to murder their wives and so on) and something more seriously felt (Wilt as a man who having reached rock-bottom in his unlucky life finds himself axially real and recovers his self-respect. The two modes cancel each other out.

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## TLS Commentary

## A many-centred thing

G. M. Trevelyan's superficially simple view that "social history might be defined negatively as the history of a people with the politics left out" seems worlds away from that of modern social historians, who see their discipline, in Lucien Febvre's words, as "a new kind of history" — committed, many-centred and anti-positivist. Certainly Trevelyan's ordered orthodoxy contrasts strongly with the aspirations of *Social History*, a new journal edited by Janet Blackton and Keith Mould (McMurch, thrice yearly); social history, in the view of its editors, "must be at once iconoclastic, corrosive of received explanations; creative in producing new concepts and deriding new methods; and aggressive, encouraging incursions into all fields of historical analysis". Yet Trevelyan's own aspirations were hardly prosaic or limited. He talked of social history having "its own positive value and peculiar concern". Its scope extending to "the relationship, family, household, work and leisure; attitudes, culture and the real life of men". The differences — and their existence is after all manifested in the substantive and analytical patterns of *English Social History* — lie partly in the explicit acknowledgment by the moderns that "the manner of analysing social process is precisely the basis of certain forms of ideological conflict, partly in the resulting receptivity for radical critiques, and partly in the soundness of recent historical research on social structure, action and attitudes which is shaped by a preoccupation with "total" social processes.

The editors are naturally concerned to differentiate their product. And not unreasonably, they deny that it is comparable to any of the proliferating specialisms of the social sciences. "It is not, in doing so," they are unnecessarily provocative, even pugnacious, on the score of their unconventionality, their desire for "polemic and dissent", and their suspicion of social science concepts, methods and theories. After all, as they themselves emphasise, social history is quite properly an extraordinarily eclectic field, with "no fundamental organising concept, or single central emphasis", characterized by a range of explanations and methods. They will, therefore, no doubt welcome articles about old questions, or based on conventional approaches, or defending received explanations.

More subtly, where novelty or "orthodoxy" triumphs, it no longer startles: we are all revolutionaries. The point is exemplified by the three main articles in the first number. David Jones on incandescence in East Angles in the 1840s, Tony Judt on rural socialism in Europe 1870-1914, and E. P. Thompson on poverty and social theory in the 1880s. The work of labour, urban, demographic and other social historians in this

country over the past fifteen or twenty years, the contribution of older English journals (particularly the influential tradition of the *Annals* school — have all laid a firm, if highly variegated, foundation for the promised contribution of *Social History*. (Although even the recent inflation has hardly prepared us for the outrageous price of £3.50 an issue.)

The publication of this journal, like any recent (unrelated) launching of a Social History Society, reflects the completion of the first stage in the intellectual growth of a young, but no longer new, historical perspective. All historians, whatever their methodological or ideological upbringing, will welcome the signs of the institutionalization of a set of important ways of asking questions about the past and about society. It will be interesting to see whether the new respectability and self-confidence can sustain a variety of ideological commitments. And it will be exciting to observe the advance in mature scholarship which a following-away of self-consciousness is likely to stimulate.

The  
Fisherman's  
Wife

Offshore the hidden rocks  
Are sharper than seems;  
Harder than this boat  
Can touch and stay afloat

Where go down quick  
Where nothing breaks  
The green but crabs and flesh  
And then more crabs and fish.

After a week the sea  
Washes one  
With sand oil through its hair  
Up on the beach there.

Run and fetch her quick.  
At the washing green.  
Hanging out his clothes.  
When that is done, she goes

And picks away crabs  
Fruiting the wrists.  
From a face unlikes what clings.  
Those are his spoil things.

Each crab she softly takes  
And puts it in a bowl.  
Then says to the fisherman  
To set him again, again.  
Lads: set him again.

Alastair Fowler

The Moor  
of Oxford

More commonly than not, Shakespeare's productions by Eng Lit don't come with terrific programme notes but sprangy theses. Bristol, with critical canon gloomed from the producer's years of mull in the critical canon, the printed programme, down by thin-thumbed hands, is a veritable masterpiece. The production of *Othello* at the Oxford Playhouse last week (and in France shortly) certainly provided a spectacle for students. Shakespeare's *Othello* with good reason, to all maidens of quality, they run away with Blackmoor. But, for once, the "new look" at the play, and the "new look" at the



"A girl and an older woman in church", a pencil and watercolour sketch by Gwen John probably made in the late 1920s. Anthony O'Brien, 9 Dering Street, London W1, includes it in an exhibition of her work (open until March 26) to mark the centenary of her birth. Gwen John, who lived and worked in Paris and whose reputation as a lifetime was overshadowed by that of her younger brother Augustus, died in 1939.

An exile  
for posterity

Self-effacing tributes are always the most enduring. Saint John Perse was a master at composing them for his fellow stars in the extraordinary modern pléiade which revolved around the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. The latest issue of this mysterious and illustrious champion of high literature is a homage to Saint-John Perse who died last September at the age of eighty-eight, the last of the founding luminaries to burn out.

In his prefatory note, the editor Marcel Arland refers to many unsolicited testimonies received by his office and all conveying one message to the poet: "Merci d'avoir vécu et de vivre encore par votre œuvre." Such tributes from those of Claudel, Gide, Larbaud, Rivière, Valéry, not to mention Rilke, Auden and others, whose absent presence represents the seven eighths of the iceberg necessary to keep the present chandelier of French letters from falling.

Admittedly, the "œuvre" of Saint-John Perse is not a simple matter. It is a vast, complex, and often contradictory body of work. (Albert Henry, Pierre Guerre, ...) may have recognized the inadequacy of any homage paid to a poet who so quickly achieved the status of a classic, who is so often revered rather than read.

When Saint-John Perse died, Arland declared him the greatest French poet of this century. Each of the contributors to the *NRF* volumes, in different ways and to different degrees, wants to claim Perse as his own, and this is where the "obviousness test" comes into play. The more self-involving and anecdotal the writer, the less essential his homage, and the more self-effacing, the more essential. His homage to Perse is often a mistake for a confession of his own limitations. He is often a poet who is not a poet, a poet who is not a poet, a poet who is not a poet.

## Truths and consequences

By Douglas Johnson

PIERRE MENDES FRANCE:  
La Vérité guidait le pas  
272pp. Paris: Gallimard, 36fr.

It is tempting to say that Pierre Mendes France is the best Prime Minister that France never had. Perpetually he has been the odd man out in French politics, the solitary figure whose opposition has been uncompromising and whose *gravité du désert* has never ended. As such his position is unique, and successive generations seem to have recognized this by considering him with a respect which has vacillated from the grudging to the viddy, enthusiastic, but which has always been real. Yet this is to forget that there was once a Mendes France government, and a very famous one, which lasted from June 18, 1954, to February 6, 1955. It was the government which brought an end to French fighting in Indochina, which laid the foundations for the independence of Tunisia, encouraged Franco-German conciliation, and sought to establish the basis for the long-term economic expansion of the country. C'était le beau temps.

The Président du conseil was young and dynamic. His personality seemed to dominate the political scene, and as he opened dossier after dossier it was claimed that at last France had a government which would get things done and which would not be the laughing-stock of the chancelleries of Europe. Surrounded by a support which was orchestrated from the columns of *L'Express* by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, François Groulx and François Mauriac, this government was said to represent a new, youthful France, the long sought for progressive movement which was separate from the communists. Mendes France found himself being compared to Roosevelt (and the deliberate use of the initials PMF appeared as an ostentatious reference to the FDR), to Clemenceau, for many of his political difficulties (the comparison with Clemenceau became less flattering: "Il a les mêmes défauts que Clemenceau" was how President Coty used to put it). Out of power it is said that he has been ineffective in opposition, unable to work with others, devoted only to his role as the champion of the poor, unable to make enormous and costly blunders such as his apparent support for student anarchism in 1968 and his over-ready acceptance of an alliance with the mayor of Marseilles in the presidential election of 1969. Viewed in this way, *Mendes France* is simply a temporary myth largely sustained by a few academics who like nothing so much as a might-have-been.

A more generous, though still sharply critical, assessment would say that Mendes France has suffered from a failure to understand French tradition. This is a bit snobbish (reference to his being Jewish (although his opponents have never failed to exploit this, calling him "le juif" and "le monsieur Mendes France" as to a curious tendency to believe as if he were in Britain (where, of course, he served with the Free French Air Force). Thus, while as the Minister of the Interior, the British admiral nobody so much as a minister who resigns on a point of principle, there is no reason to believe that Mendes France ever gained any credit for his resignation from de Gaulle's government in 1955 (over financial policy) or from Guy Mollet's government in 1956 (over Algeria). More recently, on French television, an interview recalled an article written by the novelist Romain Gary in *Le Monde*. Gary had been in the air force with Mendes France, and he said that when they were learning navigation in the classroom and on the blackboard, Mendes was the best in the class. But the only time he flew with him, then Mendes lost his way. Was this true? asked the interviewer. The reply was that Mendes did not remember getting lost with Romain Gary, but he remembered that he had often got lost. Such a reply would have been successful in England (perhaps Mendes France is the best leader that the British Labour Party never had?), but one could sense that the admission of incompetence, however cheerful, goes down badly in France.

Clearly, any book by Mendes France is of the greatest interest, and *La Vérité guidait le pas*, a collection of essays about fourteen different political figures, will be different political figures, will be subjected to the classic scrutiny. In spite of the occasional nature of certain of these pieces, many of which were written for commemorative, death, or anniversary occasions, there is an impressive unity of



Pierre Mendes France talking to reporters in 1969.

other politician since Léon Blum (in whose 1938 government he served). It was said, and it is still repeated, that when in power he abandoned Indochina and snatched the process whereby the French were to be ousted from North Africa; he resigned as a government did nothing to further a government of the left and was merely the precursor of the technological expert who now dominates French politics; and if his period in office was short-lived it was because his own intransigence was responsible (the comparison with Clemenceau became less flattering: "Il a les mêmes défauts que Clemenceau" was how President Coty used to put it). Out of power it is said that he has been ineffective in opposition, unable to work with others, devoted only to his role as the champion of the poor, unable to make enormous and costly blunders such as his apparent support for student anarchism in 1968 and his over-ready acceptance of an alliance with the mayor of Marseilles in the presidential election of 1969. Viewed in this way, *Mendes France* is simply a temporary myth largely sustained by a few academics who like nothing so much as a might-have-been.

But the author has other preoccupations, and his wishes to see these funeral orations and reflections for other purposes. He wishes, in the person of Albert Dalimier, who was unfairly suspected of dishonesty at the time of the Stevinsky scandal, for example, to attack this violence of the right. Through a republican progression, from Ferry to Jaurès and to Harriot, he wants to show how the social question has been progressively emphasized, as it has come to assume a greater importance in his own career. There is a discussion of the role of the individual in state affairs, with the author limiting his own importance in such episodes as the ending of the war in Indochina to that of someone who succeeded merely in accelerating the pace of events. But above all he wishes to use these past figures as witnesses who will echo his attack on the present regime in France. The disasters of the past were avoidable, he claims, had politicians been honest and loyal. The war in Algeria would never have evolved as it did had the Statute for Algeria, voted by the French parliament in 1947, been applied as it should have been. And he argues that the same process of concealment, the "embellishment" of the nature of the political power, can equally lead to disaster and prestige what could be, in his words, "les abus des pouvoirs militaires, policiers et administratifs".

The article on de Gaulle is central to this argument. (Especially, with some surprise, that this volume was not liked by the general's family, which will hardly surprise the most naive reader.) Here, we find a complete distinction between the de Gaulle of 1940 and the de Gaulle who was active after the Liberation and who came to power in 1958. The distinction is that the de Gaulle of 1940 was a man who understood why it was that the general had to speak of himself in the third person, since he was obviously speaking about somebody else. (The

man of 1940 was distinguished by honesty and clarity as well as by courage; the man of 1958 came to power and kept himself there by a mixture of cunning, reticence, complicity and duplicity. The result, an insolent capitalism and a political system which is incapable of carrying out any of the reforms which are necessary to present-day France. It is interesting to compare these views of de Gaulle with what Mendes France was saying about him as long ago as February 1942. Then, having escaped from France and come to London, he had an interview with Churchill's personal assistant, Major Desmond Morton. Although some Foreign Office officials had expressed doubts about him (one of them reporting that he had been "très discuté" as a politician before the war), Morton was very impressed and described a detailed account of their conversation which is to be found in the *Public Record Office*. He reports that Mendes France made a clear distinction between the de Gaulle who was to be admired as a symbol of France's hopes, and the de Gaulle who was distrusted as a politician.

The systematic nature of this political philosophy is impressive, but it raises inevitable questions, some of which, such as the Mendes France rejection of presidential election by universal suffrage, it would not be fair to discuss since there is no detailed argument about it here. But one can ask why it was that Mendes France was content, for the greater part of his career, to be a member of the Radicals, the party which contained the greatest diversity of opinions and beliefs, as he himself admits. How is it that today Mendes France can reaffirm his admiration for the Radicals, Harriot, and Blum, when all three were outstanding practitioners of the great political game, distinguished representatives of a political system which was characterized by manoeuvre, compromise and bargaining? If what de Gaulle left behind him was only "un système de gouvernement et un décorum parlementaire", how is one to describe the governments of the preceding republics, and the framework within which Mendes France himself related to the political scene?

If Mendes France likes to contrast his optimism, since he believes that the cat can be avoided, to de Gaulle's Mauritanian pessimism, as he calls it, he nevertheless offers no obvious solution, since he neither believes in the personal remedy of voting for Mendes France nor in any return to the Fourth Republic. One is tempted to conclude, as others have done, that Mendes France is not so much a paradox in French politics as a paradox himself, where a succession of clearly thought-out principles leads to a whole which is confused.

But there remains an important message. It is in the tradition that the Republic must be defended, or it will be nothing. The contract between government and electorate must be clear; the politician must analyse and explain; the people must ponder and decide. It is well to be reminded of fundamental truths even when the political scene is so confused. Each country needs its own Mendes France, but it is France which has the original.

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# To the Editor

## Aleksandr Blok

Sir,—Though it may be necessary to correct John Bayley's remark to the effect that Blok never composed another poem after *The Twelve* (in his generous review of my book *The Poet and the Revolution*, January 30), new mistakes should not be perpetrated in the process. Kyril FitzGibbon (February 20) asserts that *Scythians* was written "a few weeks after Blok had finished *The Twelve*". Yet the letter was dated January 28, 1918, on its completion, while *Scythians* was composed in its immediate aftermath on January 25-30. It is also misleading for Mr FitzGibbon to state that Blok's "last poem" is the one dated February 11, 1921. If data are at issue, there is no reason to ignore Blok's poem on his encounter with A. P. Kropotkin, which bears the date March 15, 1921.

However, there is some danger here of missing the point. Professor Bayley's generalization is not invalidated by the omission or inclusion of such poems: the indisputable and tragic loss of Blok's creative power in the aftermath of *The Twelve* cannot be minimized. I have forgotten how to write poems," was Blok's own comment (1919). "In January 1918 I surrendered myself to the elements for the last time" (his note of 1920; italics mine). Then last three and a half years of his life were lived in the stoically accepted English roots in this realization, an anguish which this occasional "album" piece did little to alleviate.

SERGEI HACKEL,  
School of European Studies, University of Sussex.

Sir,—It was good to see from John Bayley's review (January 30) of Sergei Hackel's fine new study of Aleksandr Blok and *The Twelve*

that this poet, who loses so much in translation, still continues to impress a circle of readers far beyond the narrow confines of "Slavonic Studies".

While agreeing wholeheartedly with Professor Bayley's assessment of Dr Hackel's scholarly merits and tradition, I should like to take issue with him on two points.

(1) Although Dr Hackel's study does tend to stress (perhaps even occasionally to overstate) the interplay and continuity of ideas underlying the central symbolic concepts of Blok's poetry (Beautiful Lady, The Stranger, Russia, Christ) he nowhere suggests that there was any confusion—either in the mind of the poet or in the poetry itself—between Christ and the Stranger. It would require a book to prove this (if, indeed, such things are susceptible to "proof"), but the poetry itself offers sufficient evidence that the colours, the rhythms and the "feel" of these images are totally dissimilar. This is too subtle and complex a theme to be dealt with (to a later, but I would say that the "similarities" pointed out by Professor Bayley are either fortuitous or are common to so much of Blok's poetry as to render their presence in any particular poem totally unsurprising).

The basic difference between the two concepts is that Christ was to Blok a spiritual and historical reality who comes and goes in his poetry, unbidden and occasionally, as in *The Twelve*, unwelcome, whereas the Stranger was "an incarnation of nothingness," a dream called to life by art, Blok's own creation, deliberately invoked. He called her a "doll," a "phantom," a "devilish elixir of many worlds." As is his own state in the winter of 1907 that Blok compares to his "curator to the elements" while writing *The Twelve*. The poem "The Stranger" was written in April

1906. It would therefore be more fruitful to analyse "The Snow Mask" in relation to *The Twelve*. Some material on which to base such an analysis is available in English in my notes to this cycle: *Aleksandr Blok*, Pergamon Oxford Russian Series, 1972.

(2) The accusation of irresponsibility would appear, even in the context of the review, to be Professor Bayley's own. The terms in which it is made are surely misleading. Was Cassandra "irresponsible"? A Blok not concerned over the revolution of 1905, that the enlightened, humanist tradition into which he had been born (and which he deeply loved and revered) could not survive, except perhaps, physically and for a while by degenerating into something other than itself (the idea of which he equally deeply hated). This was not an easy knowledge to bear, nor did he bear it irresponsibly.

AVRIL PYMAN,  
The Farm House, East Lilburn,  
Ainwick, Northumberland.

## Scottish Painters

Sir,—Out of respect for David and Francis Irwin, colleagues in the small world of Scottish art historians, and lost by being more particular I should seem to be personal, I made one general point in my review of your book (January 30) on the Scottish Painters of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is clear that the vision of a humanity liberated from the dichotomies of existence which he plucked the world since the fall from grace in Greek times.

Lukács's own fall from political grace as a result of the political heresies was a convenient excuse for him to return to the aesthetic sphere. His relationship with the chosen means, the Communist Party, was from their on an ambivalent basis. Lukács, a Marxist, was a bourgeois and bourgeois alike. He kept the vision alive in aesthetic illusion—he clearly doubted the feasibility of its realization under Stalin.

This models for such a realism were Balzac, Thomas Mann, Tolstoy, Remond, etc. It was not surprising Brecht's dispute between the Brechtian theories, which started in 1932 in the "Lukácskrise" and culminated in the expressionist debate of 1938. Lukács was held by his opponents to be a leading theoretician of conservative, neo-classical, or even bourgeois realism, far from being "in direct opposition to the orthodox" Stalinist theories of Zhdanov," as Graham White main-

tain, Lukács was in fact, to them, an Asopian heretic. The official Stalinist position was firmly established with both a home base and international significance. I do not believe that any of this is particularly contentious and if your correspondents had read my review, which was (February 20) extremely careful to read the book in question, which is rather long, this correspondence would have been unnecessary.

J. D. MACMILLAN,  
Department of Fine Art, University of Edinburgh, 19-20 George Square.

## Lukács

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Lukács's own fall from political grace as a result of the political heresies was a convenient excuse for him to return to the aesthetic sphere. His relationship with the chosen means, the Communist Party, was from their on an ambivalent basis. Lukács, a Marxist, was a bourgeois and bourgeois alike. He kept the vision alive in aesthetic illusion—he clearly doubted the feasibility of its realization under Stalin.

This models for such a realism were Balzac, Thomas Mann, Tolstoy, Remond, etc. It was not surprising Brecht's dispute between the Brechtian theories, which started in 1932 in the "Lukácskrise" and culminated in the expressionist debate of 1938. Lukács was held by his opponents to be a leading theoretician of conservative, neo-classical, or even bourgeois realism, far from being "in direct opposition to the orthodox" Stalinist theories of Zhdanov," as Graham White main-

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set in Scotland since the death of Jameson. In the next generation, with Raeburn, Scottish painting was firmly established with both a home base and international significance. I do not believe that any of this is particularly contentious and if your correspondents had read my review, which was (February 20) extremely careful to read the book in question, which is rather long, this correspondence would have been unnecessary.

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## 'Icons'

Sir,—As one of those who try to "decide the meaning of icons by study", I deplore Helen Philon's polemic (January 30) against my colleague and friend Robin Cormack. It is true that icons, the subject of the book which he reviewed (December 26, 1975), are polyvalent subjects. They are of interest to the student of comparative religion and of Christian theology as well as to the art-historian and the worshipper. Writing as an art-historian, it is natural that Dr Cormack should call attention to weaknesses in John Sturt's treatment of the art-historical aspects of his subject.

I do not wish to bore your readers with a controversy which, to many, might seem Byzantine in the pejorative sense of this word. However, to put the record straight, I feel bound to give my view that Miss Philon's polemic in no way invalidates the scientific precision of Dr Cormack's remarks.

CHRISTOPHER WALTER,  
Institut d'études byzantines, Paris 6.

## John Harrison

Sir,—The second paragraph of Francis Watson's review of *The Art of Byzantium* by George Denham (February 13) is misleading in its references to John Harrison.

At no time was there any question of a first prize and/or second prize in the acceptance of the Act of 12 Queen Anne, Chapter 12 (1714) provides for a "Public Record" of £10,000 or £15,000 or £20,000 to be paid at the discretion of Commissioners appointed under the Act which specified requirements for the treatment of the records. Harrison's No 4 won a somewhat pyrrhic victory, nor did it earn £5,000 in that year. The story of John Harrison's achievements and of his treatment by the Commissioners appointed under the 1714 Act is able to be found in Humphrey Quill's *John Harrison, the Man who Found Longitude* (John Baker, 1965). Suffice here to say that it was not until July 1773 that the Act 13 Geo III c77 authorized Harrison to be paid a further £8,750, making a total longitude award of £13,750 and an unpaid balance of £15,000 to Harrison.

ERIC S. WHITTE,  
34 Cyprus Mount, Wakefield.

## The Boer War

Sir,—In his review of my book *The Boer War* (February 20) Edgar O'Ballance states that "it was before the two Boer capitals were entered". I would be grateful if you would make it clear that he cannot have taken this erroneous information from my book. It describes how the war began officially with the capture of the Orange Free State capital; the other capital, Pretoria, was captured on June 5, 1900, less than a month after the war had begun. Although the British Army made some very serious mistakes in the early months of the Boer War, its performance during its first year of this war was nothing like as lamentable as O'Ballance suggests.

EVERISLY BELFIELD,  
Department of Adult Education, University of Southampton, Southampton SO9 5NR.

## The Olympics

Sir,—G. L. Huxley does a little too far in his interesting article on the Olympics (February 20) when he says that "to the Greeks what mattered was coming first" and that "they would have been puzzled by modern emphasis on the medals and the time-titles". According to Thucydides (VI.16.2), claimed to have brought great credit on his city by entering seven chariots in the chariot race at Olympia and gaining second and fourth, as well as first, places with them. Also Mr Huxley seems to forget when he goes on to say that "there is no way of saying to Greek records in Greek". The Thucydides History is, among other things, a record-book full of superlatives serving just that purpose, though admitted the records in question are not in the edited text, and the Greeks are generally introduced with that twinkle in the historian's eye, the little word *de*.

DENNIS PROCTOR,  
43 Canbury Square, London.

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HARVARD PRESS

# On the way to somewhere else

## By Humphrey Trevelyan

R. J. GAVIN:  
Aden Under British Rule 1839-1967  
472pp. C. Hurst, £11.50.

Throughout its long history Aden has never been important as a territory, but only as a convenient place on the way to somewhere else. It was useful in the British to have a port firmly in British hands as a coaling station and later for oil bunkering, but in this century it has been its strategic advantages were debatable. In 1920, the commander-in-chief in India observed that as we communicated the Indian Ocean Aden was in no danger, and if we did not, he could not see that it was of any use to us. By the time we left in November 1967, the view in the Foreign Office that we no longer had any conceivable interest in staying there, and since then nothing has happened to disprove that assessment.

A question to be answered in a history of Aden under the British is why we got ourselves into such a tangle of Middle East Command established in Aden because of the uncertain future of the base in Cyprus and political developments in Kenya in order to act "as the pivot of British defence of the Middle East", with the dual role of defending the oil-rich dependencies in the Gulf and providing a staging-point on route to the other major base east of Suez at Singapore. Let us forget that these important interests were so soon to disappear. Even on the political assumptions current at the time, it was risky in the extreme to superimpose a vast military base upon so fragile a political organization in the hope that it could shelter behind an equally independent and internationally recognized federation? Politically we were on the way out. We were trying to do it in the end, it became clear that it was the base, not the federation, which was the major threat to its existence.

The construction of a stable and practical policy in the hinterland was made more difficult by the continued presence of the British in the Gulf. The British power for their continued existence. The construction of a stable and practical policy in the hinterland was made more difficult by the continued presence of the British in the Gulf. The British power for their continued existence.

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and inefficient. Its main proponent, the shikri, Bulhuin, continued and remained aloof in his home village. Hindered by the disparate interests of its members and the lack of continuity engendered by the rotating chairmanship, the federation, as J. T. Gavin writes, "never assumed an effective political identity, but remained an aggregation of interested individuals and groups, united not so much by a positive fellow-feeling as by fear of common enemies". There is much substance in the judgment that the British of these latter days were trying to impose a logical pattern on a historical system which would not take it. As Mr Little puts it:

Britain had no stake in the area beyond ensuring the security of Aden port. Britain and the tribes had lived together for about a century when each tried not to notice the other's existence more than was necessary; and with a certain amount of modest help they might have continued to do so until Britain had bowed gracefully out of Aden.

It was surely, too, an unnecessary error to have championed the British base in 1950 to make it the headquarters of Middle East Command established in Aden because of the uncertain future of the base in Cyprus and political developments in Kenya in order to act "as the pivot of British defence of the Middle East", with the dual role of defending the oil-rich dependencies in the Gulf and providing a staging-point on route to the other major base east of Suez at Singapore. Let us forget that these important interests were so soon to disappear. Even on the political assumptions current at the time, it was risky in the extreme to superimpose a vast military base upon so fragile a political organization in the hope that it could shelter behind an equally independent and internationally recognized federation? Politically we were on the way out. We were trying to do it in the end, it became clear that it was the base, not the federation, which was the major threat to its existence.

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#### Local Studies Librarian

AP4/5 (£3,366-£4,095)

The successful candidate will be responsible for all local studies material (except archives) relating to North Tyneside and its surrounding area and will work in close cooperation with an archivist on the staff of the County Archivist of Tyne and Wear Metropolitan Council.

The local studies service has been developed considerably during the last two years and this post offers a most challenging and rewarding opportunity to librarians interested in this specialism. The person appointed will be responsible for instituting a publications programme, building up a close liaison with schools and local history societies, and training staff in the relevant research methods.

Applicants must be chartered librarians and should have experience in the field of local history.

Further information may be obtained from the Chief Librarian, Central Library, Northumberland Square, North Shields, Tyne and Wear (N/S 82811).

Application forms available from: Chief Personnel Officer, 7 Northumberland Square, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE30 1QQ, and should be returned two weeks after the appearance of this advertisement.

### County of Cleveland Leisure and Amenities Department

#### CLEVELAND COUNTY LIBRARIES

#### Branch Librarian

£2,922-£3,282

Applicants are invited from qualified librarians for a post as Branch Librarian in the Harrogate District of the County Library. These applicants should be in possession of the Part II Examination or the degree equivalent.

If approved cases, financial assistance with household removal expenses will be available. Temporary housing accommodation for married couples may be available in approved cases, within the County area.

Forms of application may be obtained from the County Librarian, Central Library, Victoria Square, Harrogate, in which they should be returned by March 15, 1976.

### ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

(General Services) Bury St. Edmunds Library  
Post N45

Librarian scale £2,127-£3,282

A qualified Librarian is required to take responsibility for the adult readers advisory service in the Bury St. Edmunds Library.

Application form, job description and further details available from Hilary Hammond, Area Librarian, Library Administration Unit, 5 Honey Hill, Bury St. Edmunds. Closing date March 22, 1976.

### Suffolk County Council

### BRIGHTON POLYTECHNIC

Learning Resources

#### Course Resources Officer (Falmer)

The Brighton College of Education at Falmer will merge with Brighton Polytechnic from September, 1976, but it is intended to run this new post as soon as possible. A large expansion of Learning Resources services for the merged institution has already begun.

The post will involve working closely with teaching staff to integrate multi-media approaches in the learning process. Candidates should be Chartered Librarians with experience in multi-media library services in education. The person appointed will initially be asked to develop the exploitation of resources in teacher education and teaching experience would therefore be of advantage.

Salary will be within the Burnham F.E. Lecturer II scale £3,270-£5,493 p.a.

N.I.C. conditions of service. Further details and application forms obtainable from:

The Bursar, Brighton Polytechnic, Moulsecomb, Brighton BN2 4GJ. Tel. 0273-67304. Closing date 26th March, 1976.

### LIBRARIANS

#### BRITISH POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL FEDERATION UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

South-West HAVINGHAM

The Regional Librarian will be responsible for the development of the University's Regional Postgraduate Medical Library. The post holder will be responsible for the development of the library's collection, the provision of reference services, and the provision of information services to the medical community.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of five years' experience in a postgraduate library. They should also have a good knowledge of the medical field and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Personnel Officer, British Postgraduate Medical Federation, University of London, 11 St. Andrews Place, London N1W 7AY. Tel. 01-275 3441. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### LONDON BOROUGH OF HAYES

Applications are invited for the post of Librarian in the Hayes Branch of the London Borough of Hayes Library Service. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the branch library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the local area and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Hayes Branch, London Borough of Hayes, Hayes, London UB8 3PH. Tel. 01-894 1111. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON COURTNEY INSTITUTE OF ART

Applications are invited for the post of Librarian in the Courtney Institute of Art Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of five years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the art field and be able to work independently.

### CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC

#### Chief Librarian

Administrative grade D  
£8,656-£7,282

including London  
Weighting.

Applications are invited from experienced, qualified librarians for this post. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of ten years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, City of London Polytechnic, 117-118 Houndsditch, London, EC3A 7DU. Tel. 01-475 2121. Closing date 15th March 1976.

### THE POLYTECHNIC OF CENTRAL LONDON

#### LIBRARY ASSISTANT

For the P.C.L. Polytechnic Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, The Polytechnic of Central London, 117-118 Houndsditch, London, EC3A 7DU. Tel. 01-475 2121. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### LEICESTER POLYTECHNIC TUTOR LIBRARIAN

LECTURER II required for academic post in the Library Service, to teach and supervise the teaching staff of the Library.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of five years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Leicester Polytechnic, 100-102, Leicester, LE1 7RH. Tel. 0533 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### CITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE EDUCATION COMMITTEE EDUCATION LIBRARY

APPOINTMENT OF  
SCHOOLS LIBRARIAN

APPLICATIONS are invited for the post of Schools Librarian in the Education Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Newcastle upon Tyne Education Committee, 100-102, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RH. Tel. 01672 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

LIBRARIAN ASSISTANT

Applications are invited for the post of Librarian Assistant in the Directorate of Social Services. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Tower Hamlets London Borough, 100-102, Tower Hamlets, London, E1 7RH. Tel. 01-475 2121. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### CHESHIRE LIBRARIAN

Young People's Services to take responsibility for the development of the Cheshire Young People's Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of five years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Cheshire County Council, 100-102, Cheshire, CH1 7RH. Tel. 01625 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

### HEREFORD AND WILMERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

#### LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited from qualified librarians for the post of Librarian in the Hereford and Wilmslow County Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Hereford and Wilmslow County Council, 100-102, Hereford, Hereford, HR1 7RH. Tel. 01432 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTY LIBRARY

CHILDREN'S/ADULTS  
CANNOCK CHASS AREA

Salary: Librarian £2,127-£3,282. Application form and full details from the County Librarian, Staffordshire County Council, 100-102, Stafford, Stafford, ST1 7RH. Tel. 01827 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTY LIBRARY

CHILDREN'S/ADULTS  
CANNOCK CHASS AREA

Salary: Librarian £2,127-£3,282. Application form and full details from the County Librarian, Staffordshire County Council, 100-102, Stafford, Stafford, ST1 7RH. Tel. 01827 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### TRINITY COLLEGE CARMARTHEN

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified librarians for the post of Librarian in the Trinity College Carmarthen Library. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Trinity College Carmarthen, 100-102, Carmarthen, Carmarthen, SA31 7RH. Tel. 01292 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### CITY OF WAKEFIELD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
WAKEFIELD COLLEGE OF  
TECHNOLOGY AND ARTS

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN  
(Salary Scale A.P. £2,922-£3,282)

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified librarians for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Wakefield College of Technology and Arts. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the development of the collection.

Applicants should be qualified librarians with a minimum of three years' experience in a library post. They should also have a good knowledge of the City of London and be able to work independently.

For details contact the Librarian, Wakefield College of Technology and Arts, 100-102, Wakefield, Wakefield, WF1 7RH. Tel. 01924 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.

#### PUBLIC & UNIVERSITY

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

VACANCY: 1st JULY, 1976

Area: Canadian Literature. Rank: Assistant or Full Professor. Qualifications: Ph.D. and publication record. Salary: Negotiable. Applications: with curriculum vitae and list of three referees, to: Dr. J. A. K. Brown, Chairman, Department of English, University of Ottawa, 45 Jean Jacques, Ottawa, Canada K1N 6N5. Closing date: 15th March, 1976. Note: This is subject to budgetary permission being received.

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

VACANCY: 1st JULY, 1976

Area: 19th-century Literature. Rank: Assistant or Full Professor. Qualifications: Ph.D. and publication record. Salary: Negotiable. Applications: with curriculum vitae and list of three referees, to: Dr. J. A. K. Brown, Chairman, Department of English, University of Ottawa, 45 Jean Jacques, Ottawa, Canada K1N 6N5. Closing date: 15th March, 1976. Note: This is subject to budgetary permission being received.

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

VACANCY: 1st JULY, 1976

Area: 19th-century Literature. Rank: Assistant or Full Professor. Qualifications: Ph.D. and publication record. Salary: Negotiable. Applications: with curriculum vitae and list of three referees, to: Dr. J. A. K. Brown, Chairman, Department of English, University of Ottawa, 45 Jean Jacques, Ottawa, Canada K1N 6N5. Closing date: 15th March, 1976. Note: This is subject to budgetary permission being received.

For details contact the Librarian, University of Ottawa, 100-102, Ottawa, Ottawa, K1N 6N5. Tel. 01613 2221. Closing date 15th March 1976.